## 19<sup>TH</sup> AMENDMENT

insure domestic Franquitity provide for the co. and our Posterity, all ordain and establish that When the nation's founders drafted the excluded entirely. White women were under the

Constitution in 1787, they made no mention of women. At the time, women were generally excluded from political and, in many ways, public life. Enslaved women were

protection and authority of their husbands or fathers. In most cases, they could not vote, own property, make contracts, go to court, or control any money they earned.



Woman suffrage parade, Washington, D.C., 1913 National Archives, Records of the War Department

Philena Buily

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

In making our demand for Suffrage, we would call your attention to the fact that we represent fifteen million people—one half the entire population of the country—intelligent, virtuous, native-born American citizens; and yet

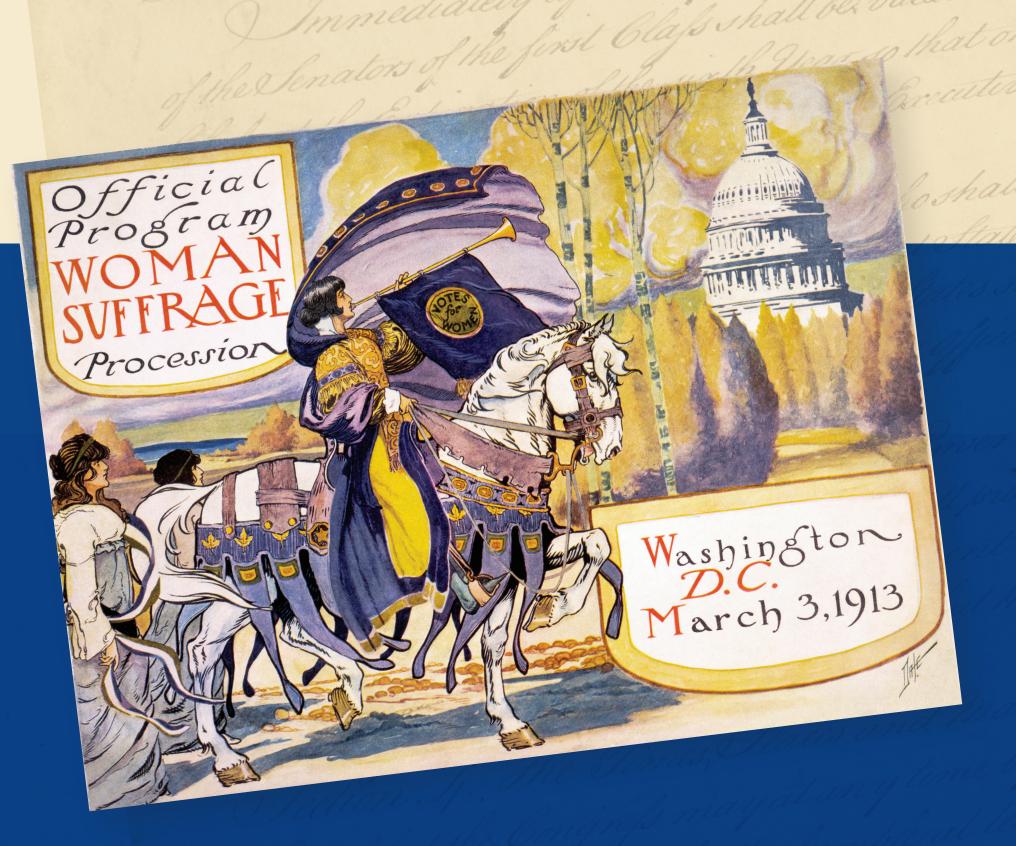
To the Senate and House of Representatives:

prohibit the several States from disfranchising any of their citizens on the ground of sex.

44 YOU CAN GO TO MEETINGS; YOU CAN VOTE RESOLUTIONS; YOU CAN ATTEND GREAT DEMONSTRATIONS ON THE STREET; BUT, AFTER ALL, THE ONLY OCCASION WHERE THE AMERICAN CITIZEN EXPRESSES HIS ACTS, HIS OPINION, AND HIS

POWER IS AT THE BALLOT-BOX."

— Zerelda G. Wallace at hearing of Senate Judiciary Committee, January 1880



## SO HOW DID WOMEN **EXERCISE THEIR VOICE?**

Many women participated in boycotts, signed public pledges and petitioned, fundraised, and organized other women into activist groups to voice their opinions about the anti-slavery movement, the sale and consumption of alcohol, working conditions, and public education.

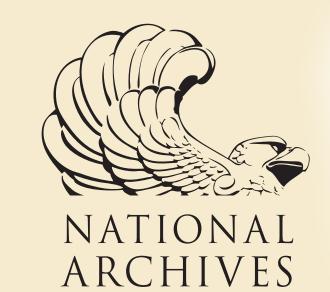
## Some Women Could Vote Before the 19th Amendment

Before the 19th Amendment changed the Constitution to read the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex" millions of women already had the right to vote. The Constitution leaves voting eligibility requirements up to the states. Therefore who can vote, and what they can vote on, has varied from state

to state over time. Before the 19th Amendment's ratification 15 states had already granted women at least some voting rights. However, because states decide voter qualifications, some women remained unable to vote after the 19th amendment for other reasons.



Suffragists protest President Wilson outside the White House, 1917 National Archives, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs





Presented in part by:









Petition for Universal Suffrage, January 29, 186

National Archives, Records of the U.S. Senate

National Archives, Records of the U.S. House of Representative

Anti-slavery petition from the women of Philadelphia, 184



